

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

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R 072026Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2512

INFO AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 11643

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, PE, BL, CI

SUBJECT: CHILEAN REACTION TO PERUVIAN PROPOSAL ON A CORRIDOR  
FOR BOLIVIA

REF: SANTIAGO 11545

1. SUMMARY: SUPPLEMENTING OUR EARLIER REPORTING, IT IS APPARENT THAT CHILEANS HAVE REACTED ADVERSELY AND SERIOUSLY TO PERU'S PROPOSAL FOR A BOLIVIAN CORRIDOR SETTLEMENT WHICH WOULD MAKE PERU A CO-SOVEREIGN IN AN AREA NOW HELD BY CHILE. AT THE SAME TIME, THE REACTION IS NOT INFLAMMATORY, AND RESPONSIBLE SOURCES ARE INDICATING THAT THE SEARCH FOR A SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENT SHOULD CONTINUE. BUT IF IT DOES, THE GOING WILL BE SLOW. END SUMMARY.

2. GOC DOUBTLESS HAD PERUVIAN PROPOSAL IN MIND WHEN ON DECEMBER 2 PRESIDENT PINOCHET TRAVELED TO ARICA AND THERE SIGNED DECREE LAWS RESTORING TO THE DISTRICT CERTAIN CUSTOMS FREE ZONES PRIVILEGES GENERALLY SIMILAR TO SOME WHICH HAD EXPIRED A YEAR OR TWO AGO. RESULT SHOULD BE TO RE-STIMULATE THE ELECTRONICS, METAL WORKING AND CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES ESTABLISHED IN ARICA BY THE GOC, AS A PART OF ITS EFFORT TO MAKE THE CITY A SIGNIFICANT AND CONCERNED PORTION OF THE CHILEAN NATION. IN SIGNING THE DECREES PINOCHET POINTED OUT THAT THAT PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT FOR ARICA WAS DESIRABLE TO OVERCOME THE DIFFICULTIES CREATED BY ITS DISTANCE FROM  
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THE REST OF THE COUNTRY. HE ALSO REFERRED TO THE POTENTIAL

INTERNATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF ARICA AS A PORT OF ENTRY NOT ONLY FOR CHILEANS, BUT ALSO FOR "BROTHERLY COUNTRIES LIKE BOLIVIA, PARAGUAY AND BRAZIL". PERU WAS NOT MENTIONED.

3. COMMENT ON PINOCHET'S MOVE WAS WIDELY FAVORABLE IN ALL CHILEAN MEDIA. AS IS THE CUSTOM WHEN GOC IS ATTEMPTING TO EMPHASIZE NATIONAL UNITY, PRESS AND MEDIA HAVE SINCE BEEN PEPPERED WITH SERIES OF STATEMENTS IN SUPPORT OF GOC OPPOSITION TO THE PERUVIAN PROPOSAL. SUCH STATEMENTS HAVE COME FROM LAW FACULTIES, STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS, PROFESSIONAL AND TRADE UNIONS, LEGAL SCHOLARS, AND PROMINENT PERSONALITIES IN GENERAL. MANY SIMPLY PARROT THE GOC ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE PERUVIAN PROPOSALS, BUT THE MORE RESPONSIBLE ONES TAKE THE LINE THAT THE DOOR IS NOT CLOSED, AND THAT WAYS SHOULD BE SOUGHT TO OVERCOME THE PROBLEMS INJECTED, HOWEVER UNJUSTLY, BY THE PERUVIANS.

4. THERE ARE AT LEAST THREE POSSIBILITIES BEING CANVASSED BY CHILEAN OBSERVERS IN TALK ABOUT TOWN. ONE SUGGESTS THAT CHILE MIGHT LEASE A CORRIDOR TO BOLIVIA INSTEAD OF CEDING SOVEREIGNTY TO IT, THUS TECHNICALLY AVOIDING THE INVOCATION OF THE 1929 TREATY. ANOTHER ENVISAGES A SOVEREIGN PORT FOR BOLIVIA IN TERRITORY TAKEN FROM THE LATTER DURING THE WAR OF THE PACIFIC, RATHER THAN TERRITORY TAKEN FROM PERU. BOLIVIA WOULD HAVE TRANSIT RIGHTS TO AND FROM THIS ENCLAVE, PRESUMABLY IN THE ANTOFAGASTA AREA. A THIRD SUGGESTION IS THAT THE AREA TO BE PLACED UNDER TRIPARTITE JURISDICTION BE LOCATED 50 PERCENT IN CHILE AND 50 PER CENT IN PERU.

5. ALL THESE PROPOSALS SEEM TO US QUITE IMPRACTICAL, FROM THE BOLIVIAN OR PERUVIAN STANDPOINT IF FROM NO OTHER. WE THINK IT SIGNIFICANT, HOWEVER, THAT SOME CHILEANS ARE TALKING THIS WAY. WE KNOW THAT THE GOC FOREIGN MINISTRY WANTS TO KEEP THE TALKS WITH PERU GOING. AND AT A SOCIAL FUNCTION DECEMBER 6 THE PERUVIAN AMBASSADOR WENT TO SOME LENGTHS TO ASSURE AMBASSADOR POPPER THAT THE PERUVIAN PROPOSAL WAS NOT A TAKE-IT-OR-LEAVE-IT PRONOUNCEMENT, BUT ONE WHICH LEFT OPEN THE POSSIBILITY FOR FUTURE DISCUSSIONS. WE CONCLUDE THAT TALKS WILL GO FORWARD; THAT THE CHILEANS WILL MAKE EFFORTS TO SEE WHETHER THE PERUVIAN DEMANDS CAN BE SCALED DOWN OR

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OTHERWISE ALTERED SUFFICIENTLY TO REVIVE THE CORRIDOR PROPOSAL; THAT THE DISCUSSION WILL REQUIRE A GOOD DEAL OF TIME; AND THAT THE PROSPECTS, WHILE SLIGHT, ARE NOT NON-EXISTENT. POPPER

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